

1. What is the significance of recent 'Motor Vehicles Agreement' (MVA) among India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh? (150 words)

**Answer:**

- The MVA agreement between sub-grouping of four SAARC nations, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) will pave the way for a seamless movement of people and goods across their borders for the benefit and integration of the region and its economic development.
- The BBIN Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) was signed on 15 June 2015 at the BBIN transport ministers meeting in Thimpu, Bhutan. The agreement will permit the member states to ply their vehicles in each other's territory for transportation of cargo and passengers, including third country transport and personal vehicles. Each vehicle would require an electronic permit to enter another country's territory, and border security arrangement between nations' borders will also remain.
- The motor vehicle agreement has been pitched as one of the most crucial aspects in increasing trade, tourism and connectivity within the SAARC region to create greater socio-economic ties.
- As per preliminary studies, transforming the transport corridors into economic corridors could potentially increase intra-regional trade within South Asia by almost 60% and with the rest of the world by over 30%.
- Further, it would also lead to the tourism boost in the region as people would be able to take their own vehicles into other countries without many formalities. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has identified 30 road projects worth US\$ 8 billion over the next five years to fill and upgrade critical connections in the four countries.
- However, the signing of agreement is merely a starting and needs to be followed-up with formulation of the required protocols and procedures in the shortest time possible to realize the ultimate objective of free movement of people and goods in the region.
- This would further need to be supplemented through building and upgrading roads, railways and waterways infrastructure energy Grids, communications and air links to ensure smooth cross border flow of goods, services, capital, technology and people. Taken together, this provides enormous opportunity for integration and development of the region.

## **PRACTICE QUESTIONS**

**Answer the following Questions**

1. How did India fare on the Millennium Development Goals related to health? In this regard, identify the relevant Sustainable Development Goals and evaluate India's capacity to meet them. (150 words)

2. What are the different rights recognized under the Forest Rights Act, 2006? Highlight the gaps in the implementation of community forest rights and community forest resource rights granted under the Forest Rights Act. Also, suggest measures to address the current scenario. (150 words)

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